

# Working Lands Enterprise Initiative Applicant Informational Session

I. Enterprise Investment Applicants  
III. Capital and Infrastructure Applicants

Presentation by:  
Colleen Leonard, Agricultural Policy Administrator  
Noelle Sevoian, Agricultural Development Coordinator



**VERMONT**

**WORKING LANDS ENTERPRISE INITIATIVE**

[www.vermontworkinglands.com](http://www.vermontworkinglands.com)

# Welcome!

# Purpose of this Webinar:

- ▶ To inform both I. Enterprise applicants and III. Capital and Infrastructure applicants about the Working Lands Initiative as well as details on the Request for Proposals:
  1. Background and purpose of the Working Lands Enterprise Initiative
  2. The three investment areas of the initiative (Overview of applicant eligibility and selection criteria, the applicant guide, application submittal)
  3. Dates, deadlines, and key contacts
  4. Q & A
- ▶ To inform the “Frequently Asked Questions” resource section of the Working Lands web-page

# Administrative Support



**Colleen Leonard, Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets  
(Presenting)**

Leonard provides administrative oversight for both the Working Lands Enterprise and the Vermont Agricultural & Forest Products Development Boards. Colleen's previous experience at the Agency includes administrative oversight of the Vermont Agricultural Innovation Center board which deployed a total of \$3.0 million of grants and matching funds into 51 value-added agriculture projects throughout Vermont.



**Noelle Sevoian, Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets  
(Presenting)**

Sevoian assists both the Working Lands Enterprise and Vermont Agricultural & Forestry Product Development Boards. Sevoian focuses on Communications and Outreach for the Initiative. Sevoian is an Agricultural Development Coordinator with the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets.

# Administrative Support



- ▶ Melissa is the Grants Administrator for the Working Lands Enterprise Initiative, working closely with grant recipients throughout the grant agreement period.

# Administrative Support



## **Alex Ibey, Agency of Commerce and Community Development**

Ibey is a Senior Economic Development Specialist with the Agency of Commerce and Community Development for the State of Vermont. He is excited to be a part of the Working Lands Enterprise Initiative and provides assistance to both the Working Lands Enterprise and the Vermont Agricultural & Forest Products Development Boards where he serves as Secretary Lawrence Miller's designee.



## **Matt Langlais, Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation**

Designee to Mike Snyder, Matt has 15 years of forestry experience. Since 2006 he has served as the Caledonia and Essex County Forester providing information, technical assistance, and outreach to Vermonters about managing and stewarding their forestland. Matt is also a Christmas tree grower, owning and managing Langlais Family Tree Farm in Burke, VT. He graduated from the University of New Hampshire with degrees in wildlife biology and forestry.

# Working Lands Enterprise Board Members

<http://workinglands.vermont.gov/boards/wleb>

- ▶ Chuck Ross, (Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets or designee) Chair
- ▶ Designee – Jolinda LaClair, (Deputy Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets)
- ▶ Mike Snyder, (Commissioner of Forests, Parks and Recreation or designee)
- ▶ Designee – Matt Langlais, (County Forester)
- ▶ Lawrence Miller, (Secretary of Commerce and Community Development or designee)
- ▶ Designee – Alex Ibey (Senior Economic Development Specialist at Commerce and Community Development)
- ▶ Joe Nelson, (One representative of the VT forest industry who is a forester) Consulting Forester
- ▶ Emma Marvin, (One representative actively engaged in commodity maple production) Butternut Mountain Farm
- ▶ Mike Rainville, (One representative actively engaged in wood products manufacturing) Maple Landmark
- ▶ Brian Kemp, (One representative of the two largest membership-based agricultural organizations in VT who is NOT a dairy farm) Mountain Meadow Farms



# Working Lands Enterprise Board Members

- ▶ **Beverley Thurber, (One representative of Vermont's dairy industry who is also a dairy farmer)**  
Lilac Ridge Farm
- ▶ **Kathleen Wanner, (One representative of a membership-based forestland owner organization)**  
Executive Director of the Vermont Woodlands Association
- ▶ **Eleanor Léger, (One representative who is actively engaged in value-added agricultural products manufacturing)** Eden Ice Cider
- ▶ **Eric DeLuca, (Two representatives actively engaged in providing marketing assistance, market development, or business and financial planning)** University of Vermont Continuing and Distance Education
- ▶ **Robin Scheu, (Two representatives actively engaged in providing marketing assistance, market development, or business and financial planning)** Addison County Economic Development Corporation
- ▶ **Jo Bradley, (Manager of VT economic Development Authority or designee)** Manager of VT Economic Development Authority
- ▶ **Designee – Sarah Isham (Senior Agricultural Loan Officer)**
- ▶ **Ellen Kahler, (Executive Director of VT Sustainable Jobs Fund or designee)**
- ▶ **Designee – Janice St. Onge (Flexible Capital Fund VSJF)**
- ▶ **Gus Seelig, (Executive Director of VT Housing and Conservation Board or designee)**
- ▶ **Designee – Ela Chapin, (Director of the Farm Viability Program)**



# Introduction

- ▶ Background and purpose of the Working Lands initiative
- ▶ Request for Proposals and Applicant Guide: The three investment areas of the initiative
- ▶ Dates, deadlines, and contact information
- ▶ Q & A

# Background and Purpose of the Working Lands Initiative

- ▶ The Vermont Council on Rural Development (VCRD) founded and led the Council on the Future of Vermont which conducted a comprehensive study and found that over 97 percent of Vermonters polled endorsed the value of the working landscape as key to VT's future; which was higher than any other value expressed by the people of Vermont.
- ▶ The Working Landscape Partnership was created to unite Vermonters working together to implement key policy and program efforts to advance Vermont's working landscape. The Partnership is made up of individuals and organizations dedicated to advancing the farm, forest and value-added natural resource economy as a vital foundation for the future of Vermont.
- ▶ "Investing in our Farm and Forest Future", is the action plan of the Vermont Working Landscape Partnership. In 2012, the Partnership successfully promoted the development of the Vermont Working Lands Enterprise Fund with the passage of the Working Lands Enterprise Bill.
- ▶ Today, VCRD is working to promote the growth of this fund and to support and celebrate a new generation of businesses on the land.

# Background and Purpose of the Working Lands Initiative

## Goals of the initiative:

1. Stimulate economic development effort on behalf of Vermont's agriculture and forest product sectors by systematically advancing entrepreneurship, business development, and job creation
2. Recognize and build on the similarities and unique qualities of Vermont's agriculture and forest product sectors
3. Increase the value of Vermont's raw and value-added products through the development of in-state and export markets
4. Attract a new generation of entrepreneurs to Vermont's Working Landscape
5. Provide assistance to agricultural and forest product businesses in navigating the regulatory process

# Background and Purpose of the Working Lands Initiative

## Goals of the initiative, continued:

6. Use Vermont's brand recognition and reputation as a national leader in food systems development, innovative entrepreneurship, and as a "green" state to leverage economic development and opportunity in the agriculture and forest product sectors
7. Promote the benefits of Vermont's working lands, from the economic value of raw and value-added products to the public value of ecological stability, land stewardship, recreational opportunities, and quality of life
8. Increase the amount of state investment in working lands enterprises, particularly when it leverages private and philanthropic funds
9. Support the people and businesses that depend on Vermont's renewable land-based resources and their sustainable and productive use

# Background and Purpose of the Working Lands Initiative

## Mission

The Vermont Working Lands Enterprise Board is an impact investment organization whose mission is to grow the economies, cultures, and communities of Vermont's working landscape by making essential, catalytic investments in critical leverage points of the Vermont farm and forest economy, from individual enterprises to industry sectors.

## Vision for Future Success

Vermont prospers and its unique sense of place thrives in large part because of intelligent investment in the people and enterprises that comprise its farm, food, and forest based systems.

# Background and Purpose of the Working Lands Initiative

- ▶ The initiative was passed in the 2012 Legislative Session, bringing a renewed commitment to Vermonter's values.
- ▶ In FY 2013 – \$986,500 to invest into Vermont's working landscape. Investments were made into 36 projects leveraging an additional \$750,000 in matching funds. Working Lands investments included:
  - ▶ Twenty Enterprise Investment Recipients, 14 grants in agriculture and six in forestry were awarded, totaling \$220,000. The Enterprise Investment Area included grants ranging from \$3,000–\$15,000 to new and growing agriculture and/or forestry based enterprises.
  - ▶ Eight Service Provider Grant Recipients, Six grants in agriculture and two in forestry were awarded, totaling \$369,802.
  - ▶ Eight Capital & Infrastructure Investment Recipients, Four enterprises in each of agriculture and forestry – eight projects total – were awarded \$411,522.

# Three Investment Areas

1. Agriculture and Forestry & Forest Products: Enterprise Investments: \$3,000–\$20,000 grants.

**Due 12/11/13**

2. Agriculture and Forestry & Forest Products: Working Lands Service Provider Grants: \$10,000 – \$150,000 grants.

**LOI's Due 11/26/13, Full Application Due: 2/28/14**

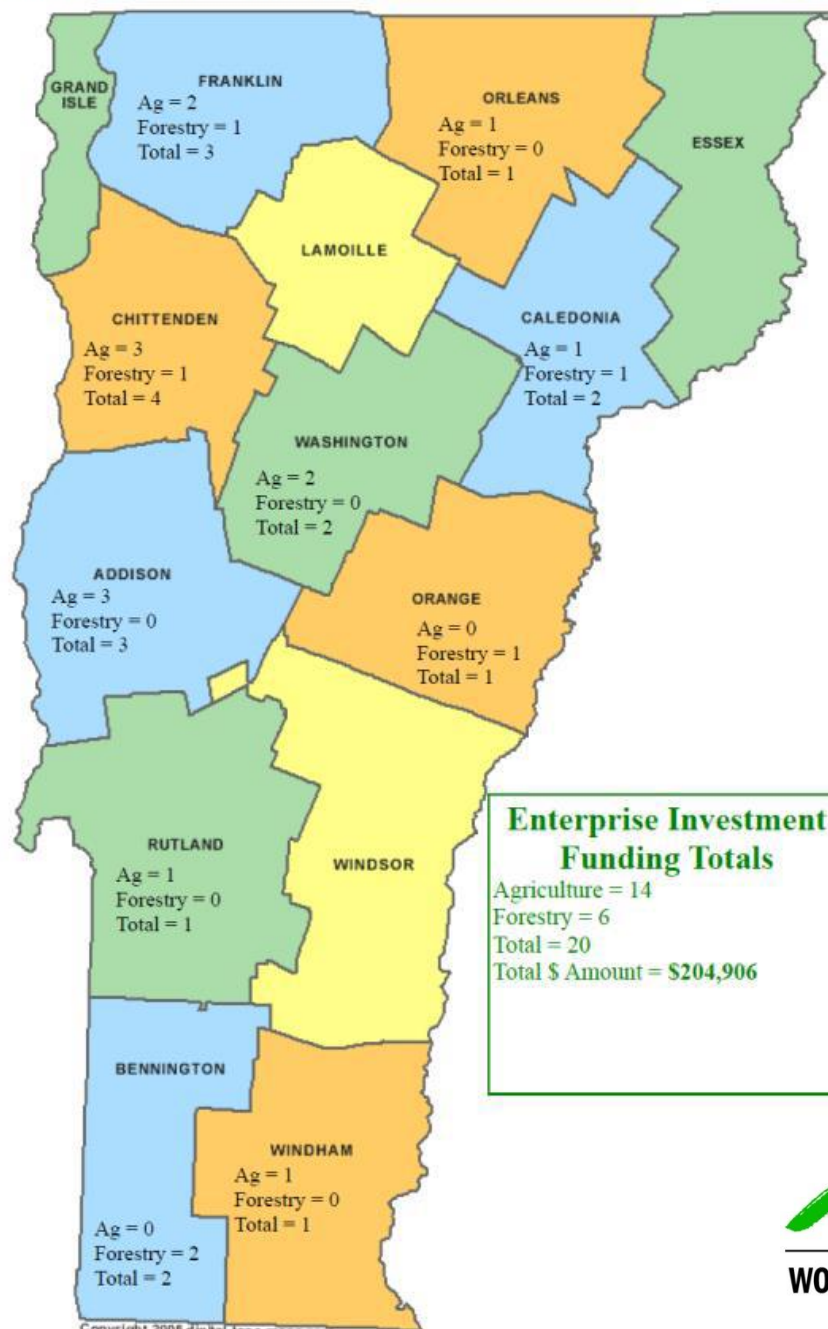
3. Agriculture and Forestry & Forest Products: Capital and Infrastructure Investments: \$15,000 – \$75,000 grants.

**LOI's Due 11/26/13, Full Application Due: 3/7/14**



# Maps of Funded Projects

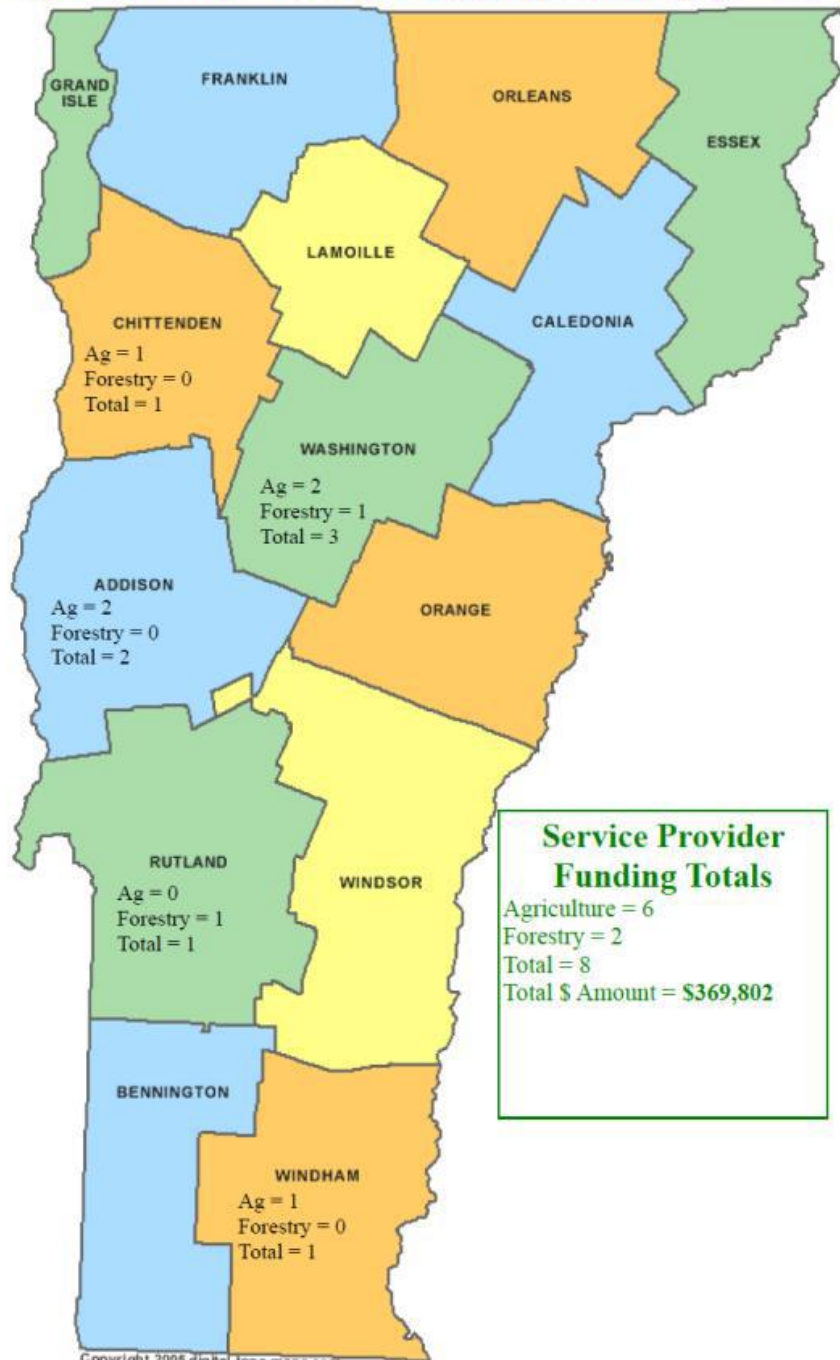
## Enterprise Investment Funded Applications (By County)



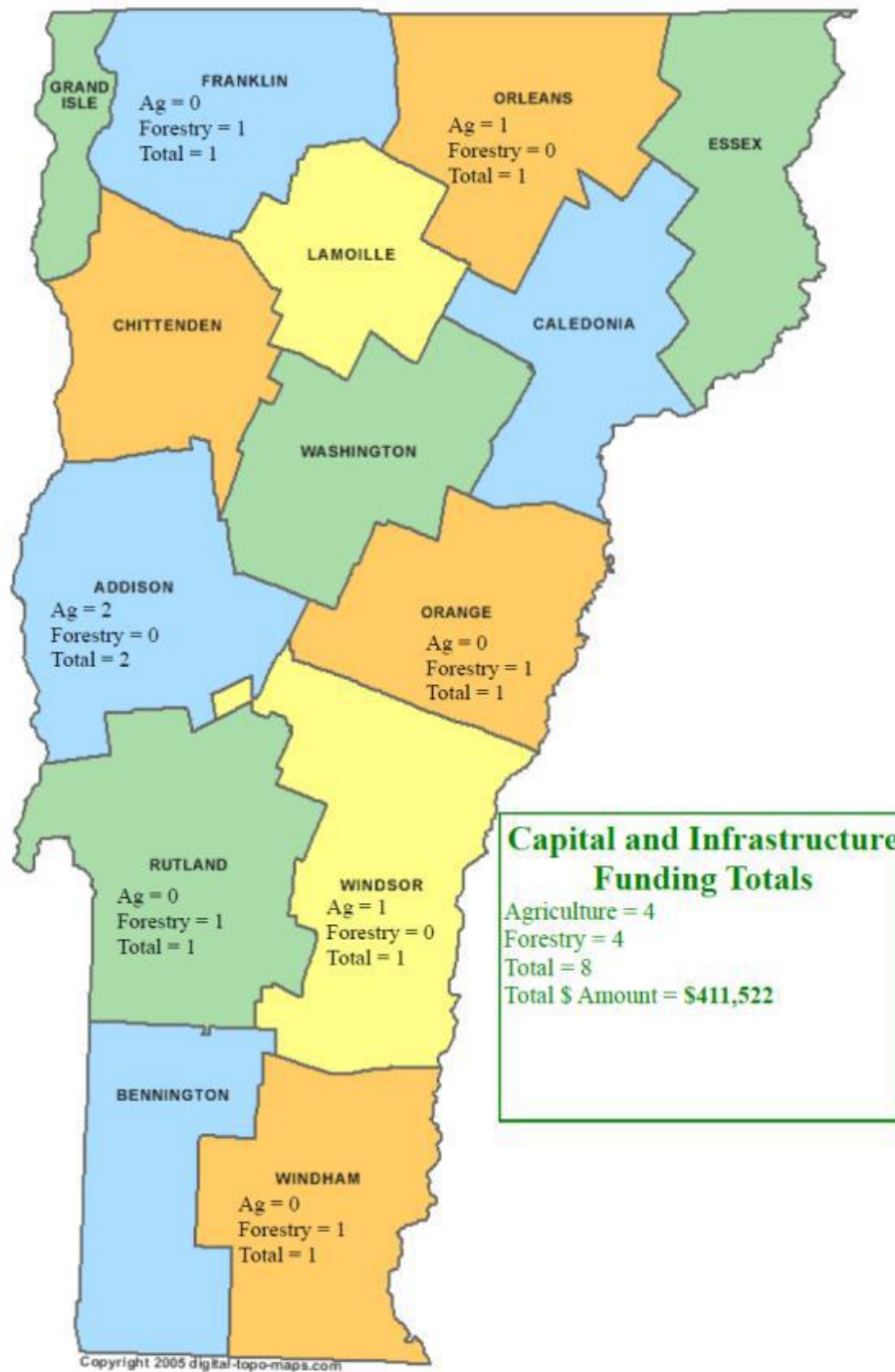
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## Service Provider Funded Applications (By County)



## Capital and Infrastructure Funded Applications (By County)



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# Three Investment Areas

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2. Agriculture and Forestry & Forest Products: Working Lands Service Provider Grants: \$10,000 – \$150,000 grants.

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3. Agriculture and Forestry & Forest Products: Capital and Infrastructure Investments: \$15,000 – \$75,000 grants.

**LOI's Due 11/26/13, Full Application Due: 3/7/14**

# Request For Proposals (RFPs):

## 1. Agriculture and Forestry & Forest Products: Enterprise Investments: \$3,000–\$20,000 grants. \*FY 13 WLEB recipient cannot apply

**Due 12/11/13**

**Eligibility:** Grants are available to Vermont agriculture, food systems, forestry and/or forest products enterprises involved in the production of agriculture and/or forest related products. Investment areas may include infrastructure, marketing, market development, business development and technical assistance to meet a need not already filled by existing programs. Primary applicant must be headquartered in Vermont.

Business and technical assistance projects may include, but are not limited to: production-specific assistance, feasibility studies for new products: assessing demand, scale, financial viability, environmental and social impacts, product research services, market development, business and financial planning, succession planning, organizational, regulatory, and/or business development assistance.

Capital and infrastructure for production capacity projects may include, but are not limited to: costs associated with project specific planning, permitting, and/or engineering/architectural design plans, capital investments in access to land (i.e., acquisition and easement), purchase and/or construction of physical assets (i.e., building and equipment costs) for value-added manufacturing (i.e., processing, storage, distribution), information technology, and renewable energy technology.



# Request For Proposals (RFPs):

## 2. Agriculture and Forestry & Forest Products: Working Lands Service Provider

Grants: \$10,000 – \$150,000 grants.

**LOI's Due 11/26/13, Full Application Due: 2/28/14**

**Eligibility:** Agriculture, food systems, forestry & forest products service provider grants are available to Vermont non-profit organizations, associations, educational institutions, private sector or partnership groups, or other entities that provide services to agricultural and/or forestry & forest products enterprises. Grants are available for service providers to provide the following types of technical assistance:

- Production training
- Process improvements
- Needs assessments/studies of baseline data critical to sector development
- Professional and organizational development services
- Product research services
- Marketing assistance /market development
- Business development
- Financial planning
- Access to capital
- Regulatory assistance and training
- Addressing workforce development needs

Applicant proposals should demonstrate capacity for regional and statewide impact, demonstrate financial sustainability of the project beyond the Working Lands Enterprise funding cycle, aggregate or provide services that benefit multiple end users, build on existing programs and partnerships, and/or create innovative models to enhance the viability of agriculture and food systems and/or forestry & forest products based businesses. Applicants must demonstrate past experience and the ability to provide technical or business assistance to agriculture or forestry & forest products based enterprises (and/or landowners) throughout the supply chain and show how these enterprises will benefit directly from the project outlined in their proposal.

Primary applicant must be headquartered in Vermont.

# Request For Proposals (RFPs):

**3. Agriculture and Forestry & Forest Products: Capital and Infrastructure Investments: \$15,000 – \$75,000 grants.**

**LOI's Due 11/26/13, Full Application Due: 3/7/14**

**Eligibility:** Capital and Infrastructure Investment grants are available to Vermont agricultural and/or forestry & forest products based businesses for capital investments that will increase operational capacity and have an impact beyond their immediate business or organization. Eligible activities include, but are not limited to: specialized personnel, access to land (acquisition or easements); building and equipment costs (e.g., processing, storage, distribution); long-term working capital, information technology; farm or forest based renewable energy business expansion; and other collaborative ventures that build capacity within the supply chain, open new markets, and/or create a replicable, innovative model.



# Letters of Intent

LOI's Due 11/26/13

## II. Agriculture, Food Systems, Forestry and Forest Products: Service Provider Grants

1. Describe the basic idea behind the intended proposal, the geographic area in which the services will be provided and the strategic role the project will play in the marketplace within your organization and/or in relation to existing services provided by others in the state.
2. Describe the need for the services to be provided and how the project will impact both primary businesses supported as well as other businesses and activities along the supply chains impacted.
3. Describe your organization, its experience and success in providing similar services, and the expertise of any partner organizations expected to participate in the project.

## III. Agriculture, Food Systems, Forestry and Forest Products: Capital and Infrastructure Grants

1. Describe the proposal and the anticipated benefit to your business or organization.
2. Describe your business or organization, its experience and successes with similar activities, and the expertise of any partner businesses or organizations expected to participate in the project.
3. Describe the proposal's benefit to the supply chain it impacts.

# Match Requirements

- ▶ **1. Agriculture, Forestry & Forest Products: Working Lands Enterprise Investments**

- ▶ **\$3,000 – \$20,000**

- ▶ Applicant must provide a cash match equal to at least 25% of the amount of Working Lands Enterprise grant requested. Match must be identified at the time of proposal application and in place at the time of the award.

**For Example:**

\$10,000 WLEF grant:

$\$10,000 \times .25 = \$2,500$  minimum cash match

$\$10,000 + \$2,500 = \$12,500$  (total Working Lands project cost = WLEB request + cash match amount)

- ▶ **2. Agriculture, Forestry & Forest Products: Working Lands Service Provider Grants**

- ▶ **\$10,000 – \$150,000**

- ▶ Applicant must provide a minimum 50% cash and/or in-kind match of grant amount requested

**For Example:**

\$20,000 WLEF grant

$\$20,000 \times .50 = \$10,000$  minimum cash and/or in-kind match

$\$20,000 + \$10,000 = \$30,000$  (total Working lands project cost must be equal to or greater than this amount)

- ▶ **3. Agriculture, Forestry & Forest Products: Working Lands Capital and Infrastructure Grants**

- ▶ **\$15,000 – \$75,000**

- ▶ Applicant must provide a minimum 1:1 match (includes in-kind and at least 50% cash) of grant amount requested)

**For Example:**

\$20,000 WLEF grant

$\$20,000 \times 1.0 = \$20,000$  minimum total match

$(\$20,000 \times .50 = \$10,000$  minimum cash match)

$\$20,000 + \$20,000 = \$40,000$  (total Working Lands project cost must be equal to or greater than this amount)

# Match Requirements

**Match Waiver** – In compelling cases the Working Lands Enterprise Board may consider a match waiver. A request for waiver must include a strong justification narrative and accompany the application. A one-page waiver request may be attached in the “Other Attachments” section on Wufoo, our online application submission system. Please submit in a doc or pdf format.

**Examples of cash match** include funds in the bank, third party funds, and applicant labor that is not associated with the regular day to day operations of the business. Labor rates should be in line with current market rates. Loans may be considered as a cash match only if the loan is directly correlated to the project and must not exceed the amount of the loan payments made during the grant period.

**Examples of in-kind match** include goods or services provided during the grant period for which no expenditure is made (i.e. contractors, consultants, or equipment provided pro bono for the project, volunteer labor, and/or donated supplies that are not part of the normal cost of doing business). In-kind contributions must be made during the grant agreement period, and must be directly related to the project. Verification for in-kind contributions that are over-valued will not be accepted.

# Applicant Guide

[http://workinglands.vermont.gov/sites/ag\\_wl\\_ei/files/FY%2014%20Guide%20RFP%20Enterprise%20Investments%20FINAL.pdf](http://workinglands.vermont.gov/sites/ag_wl_ei/files/FY%2014%20Guide%20RFP%20Enterprise%20Investments%20FINAL.pdf)

[http://workinglands.vermont.gov/sites/ag\\_wl\\_ei/files/FY%2014%20LETTER%20OF%20INTENT%20Guide%20RFP%20Cap%20and%20Infrastructure%20Investments%20FINAL.pdf](http://workinglands.vermont.gov/sites/ag_wl_ei/files/FY%2014%20LETTER%20OF%20INTENT%20Guide%20RFP%20Cap%20and%20Infrastructure%20Investments%20FINAL.pdf)

# Goals, Performance Measures, and Outcomes Template

## ► Required for Investment Areas 1, 2, and 3

### A) Goals, Performance Measures, and Outcomes Template

Fill in the table identifying the goals, performance measures, and expected outcomes of the project. Please refer to the definitions in the Applicant Guide, as well as an example of the template on the [Working Lands website](http://workinglands.vermont.gov/apply/ta/writing): <http://workinglands.vermont.gov/apply/ta/writing>. You may create a new word document with a table and narrative if this is easier for you.

Goals	Performance Measures	Expected Outcomes

# Goals, Performance Measures, and Outcomes Narrative

- ▶ 1. Why is your project being proposed?
- ▶ 2. What do you wish to accomplish using measurable targets that will be met through your project?
- ▶ 3. What are the impacts and changes you anticipate will occur due to project work?
- ▶ 4. How will your project enhance your business? Please refer to examples of measurable outcomes as identified by the Working Lands Enterprise Board on the Applicant Guide. Please quantify your response, and briefly state how you think this will take place.
- ▶ **5. Will your project have a positive outcome on other businesses and on the supply chain? If so, what types of business(es)?**
- ▶ 6. For food system businesses and organizations, please review the 25 goals contained in Chapter 2 of the Farm to Plate Strategic Plan. Chapter 2 can be downloaded here (see first 2 pages after cover page): <http://bit.ly/Rd35vj>. What goals will your project impact?

# Budget Template

Category	Total Project Costs	Working Lands Funds Requested	Describe Use of Funds	Match Funds	Match Source	All Match Secured?
Construction						
Equipment						
Materials						
Other						
Totals						



# Budget Narrative

- Describe other efforts to fund this project with other sources, and why those efforts have not been sufficient.
- Please be sure to indicate whether all matching funds are committed, or if not, your plan and timeline for securing such commitments.
- Describe how and why this project will drive investment by others in the sectors impacted.
- If match waiver requested, please provide justification here.

# Outreach Plan

- ▶ Required for Investment Area 2 (Service Providers)

# Business Plan

- ▶ Required for investment area 3 (Capital and Infrastructure applicants)

# Business Plan Template

- ▶ **1) Basic business description**
  - ▶ a. Describe what your overall business does, and your mission statement and/or goals for the business as a whole
  - ▶ b. Briefly describe your products and the market channels where products are sold
  - ▶ c. Briefly describe the history of the business
  - ▶
- ▶ **2) Products and markets description**
  - ▶ a. Describe the products you produce
  - ▶ b. Describe how and where products are produced and distributed
  - ▶ c. Describe the market channels through which you work (direct, wholesale, retail, export, etc.) and how they are geographically distributed
  - ▶
- ▶ **3) SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats for/to the business)**
  - ▶ a. Describe the strengths and weakness of the business, as well as opportunities and threats the business is facing at this time
  - ▶ b. Explain how you intend to address the weaknesses and challenges you identify
  - ▶
- ▶ **4) Management analysis**
  - ▶ a. Explain the roles of key owners and management team involved in the business
  - ▶ b. Describe their individual skills and experience they bring to the management team
  - ▶ c. Describe organizational structure (type of entity, board of advisors/directors, etc.)
  - ▶ d. Describe any gaps in current management and how any challenges or weaknesses will be addressed

# Business Plan Template

## ▶ 5) **Market analysis**

- ▶ a. Describe the indicators you have that there is a demand and market for this proposed enterprise/activity
- ▶ b. Describe the existing competition (ie. Who else is doing this already? What advantages or disadvantages do you have compared to your competitors?)
- ▶ c. Describe the marketing plan for any new products or new markets outlined in the business plan and/or proposed enterprise/activity



## ▶ 6) **Any additional applicable analyses performed, such as enterprise analysis, sensitivity analysis, breakeven analysis, etc.**



## ▶ 7) **Implementation plan: list of proposed business ideas and strategies with a timeline for implementation and details on how each step will be implemented**

- ▶ a. Describe business ideas and strategies planned over the next 1-3 years
- ▶ b. Insure that the proposed activity the WLEB fund would support is clearly outlined in the implementation plan, along with other activities the business is about to implement
- ▶ c. The implementation plan should build on the strengths and opportunities outlined in the SWOT analysis, and address weaknesses or threats

# Business Plan Template

## 8) Financial statements and analysis

- ▶ a. Describe, in narrative form, financial history and past performance of the business, analysis of the proposed project and projections
- ▶ b. Provide a current (or 12/31/12) Balance Sheet that demonstrates current assets and liabilities
- ▶ c. Provide a P&L (or Income Statement) showing revenues/income and expenses (and COGS where applicable) for 2012 (may also supply statements for 2011 and 2010 if possible)
- ▶ d. Provide corresponding projections of revenue/income and expenses for the business for the coming 12-36 months/1-3 years
- ▶ e. If applicable, provide financial projections for the proposed enterprise or activity
- ▶ f. Include explanation of assumptions for all business/enterprise projections

# Wufoo

- ▶ <https://vermontworkinglands.wufoo.com/forms/working-lands-enterprise-initiative/>
- ▶ <https://vermontworkinglands.wufoo.com/forms/working-lands-enterprise-initiative-w1mqjvmv0mqjhn5/>
- ▶ All applications must be electronically submitted at Wufoo. It is imperative that the application and all templates/attachments are fully completed and saved on a computer/thumb drive **BEFORE** entering the information onto the Wufoo site. Applicants have 24 hours to submit online. Information entered onto the Wufoo site is not saved to work on at a later time. Therefore, all materials must be ready in advance to enter in one sitting.
- ▶ If you experience difficulties with electronic submission and need assistance, please [email us](#) **no later than one week before applications are due** (Please do not call or email for such technical support within two business days of the deadline). If you continue to experience difficulty after assistance from the Working Lands Team, exceptions may be made, on a case-by-case basis, for applications to be mailed. Please call 802-585-9072 or email [working.lands@state.vt.us](mailto:working.lands@state.vt.us) for assistance.



# Selection Criteria

## 1. Agriculture, Forestry & Forest Products: Working Lands Enterprise Investments

**Quality of Proposal and Concept** – The proposal is clear and complete; the applicant is ready to receive funds and begin promptly (i.e., matching funds are secured, key partnerships are established, necessary permits and/or certifications have been obtained). The project as described is likely to accomplish the stated outcomes.

**Impact** – Project demonstrates significant enhancement of the applicant's business (e.g., increases profits, improves product value/quality, creates access to new markets; enhances operational efficiencies; creates new product line; fills a gap in an existing supply chain; utilizes innovative models/approaches and/or creates/retain jobs). Preference given to projects (refer to values in org plan)

**Need** – The project demonstrates a clear need for Working Lands Enterprise funding. The requested funds leverage other funds, and the project cannot be fully funded through other sources. Applicant demonstrates how this funding and project will enable the enterprise to progress to the next stage of its development.

**Sustainability** – The project meets business goals and contributes to long-term sustainability and financial viability. Projects that credibly outline anticipated positive impacts based on measurable financial, social, and environmental criteria will be given preference.

# Selection Criteria

## 2. Agriculture, Forestry & Forest Products: Working Lands Service Provider Grants

**Quality of Proposal and Concept** – The proposal is clear and complete. The applicant is ready to receive funds and begin promptly (i.e., matching funds are secured, target audience has been identified, strategic outreach partners have signed on), and demonstrates previous experience and skills necessary to conduct the proposed activities. The services to be provided build on existing programs and resources, and an effective outreach plan has been developed. The project, as described, identifies relevant performance measures and is likely to accomplish the stated outcomes.

**Impact** – The project demonstrates how it will enhance Vermont's working landscape (e.g., increases profits for client businesses, improves clients' product value/quality, improves clients' access to markets; enhances clients' business operations; creates an innovative replicable model/approach to the provision of technical assistance in the state, creates or retains jobs within client businesses, and/or enhances the Vermont brand). The project clearly addresses an identified need and impacts businesses along the supply/value chain (i.e., land-owner, producer, harvester, processor, manufacturer, aggregator, distributor, wholesaler, and retailer), and benefits multiple agriculture and/or forestry & forest products enterprises.

**Need** – The project demonstrates a clear need for the services being offered and the need for Working Lands Enterprise funding. The requested funds leverage other funds, and the project cannot be funded fully through other sources.

**Sustainability** – The project contributes to long-term sustainability/viability of working landscape businesses, builds on existing programs and/or resources, and demonstrates a plan for continuing services beyond the WLEF grant period. Projects that credibly outline anticipated positive impacts based on measurable financial, social, and environmental criteria will be given preference.

# Selection Criteria

## 3. Agriculture, Forestry & Forest Products: Working Lands Capital and Infrastructure Grants

**Quality of Proposal and Concept** – The proposal and business plan are clear and complete. The applicant is ready to receive funds and begin promptly (i.e., matching funds are secured, key partnerships are established, necessary permits and/or certifications have been obtained). The project as described is likely to accomplish the stated outcomes.

**Impact** – The project demonstrates how it will enhance Vermont's working landscape (e.g., increases profits for your business; improves product value/quality; improves access to markets; enhances business operations; creates an innovative replicable model/approach addressing capital and infrastructure needs; creates or retains jobs for your business and/or other supply chain businesses; and/or enhances the Vermont brand). The project clearly addresses an identified need or fills a gap in the supply chain and positively impacts businesses along the supply/value chain (i.e., land-owner, producer, harvester, processor, manufacturer, aggregator, distributor, wholesaler, and retailer), and benefits multiple agriculture and/or forestry & forest products enterprises.

**Need** – The application demonstrates a clear need for the project and the need for Working Lands Enterprise funding. The requested funds leverage other funds, and the project cannot be fully funded through other sources. The applicant demonstrates that this project will help the business or organization reach a new level of capacity, stage of development and/or financial viability.

**Sustainability** – The project contributes to long-term sustainability/viability of the working landscape, builds on an existing successful business or enterprise, and demonstrates a plan for long term financial viability beyond the WLEF grant period. Projects that credibly outline anticipated positive impacts based on measurable financial, social, and environmental criteria will be given preference.

# Timeline

- ▶ **1. Agriculture, Forestry & Forest Products: Working Lands Enterprise Investments**

Full Applications due: 12/11/13

Applicant notification: 2/25/14

Grant Agreements in place: 3/25/14

- ▶ **2. Agriculture, Forestry & Forest Products: Working Lands Service Provider Grants**

Letter of Intent due: 11/26/13

LOI notification: 1/24/14

Full Applications due: 2/28/14

Applicant notification: 5/23/14

Grant Agreements in place: 6/23/14

- ▶ **3. Agriculture, Forestry & Forest Products: Working Lands Capital and Infrastructure Grants**

Letter of Intent due: 11/26/13

LOI notification: 1/24/14

Full Applications due: 3/7/14

Applicant notification: 4/18/14

Grant Agreements in place: 5/20/14

# Contact Information

Website: [www.vermontworkinglands.com](http://www.vermontworkinglands.com)

E-mail: [working.lands@state.vt.us](mailto:working.lands@state.vt.us)

Phone: 802-585-9072

VT Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets  
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Montpelier, VT 05620-2901

# Purpose of this Webinar (recap):

- ▶ To inform Service Providers about the Working Lands initiative and details on the Request for Proposals:
  1. Background and purpose of the Working Lands Enterprise Initiative
  2. The three investment areas of the initiative  
(Overview of applicant eligibility and selection criteria, the applicant guide, application submittal)
  3. Dates, deadlines, and key contacts
  4. Q & A
- ▶ To inform the “Frequently Asked Questions” resource section of the Working Lands web-page

Thank you very much!



# Q & A